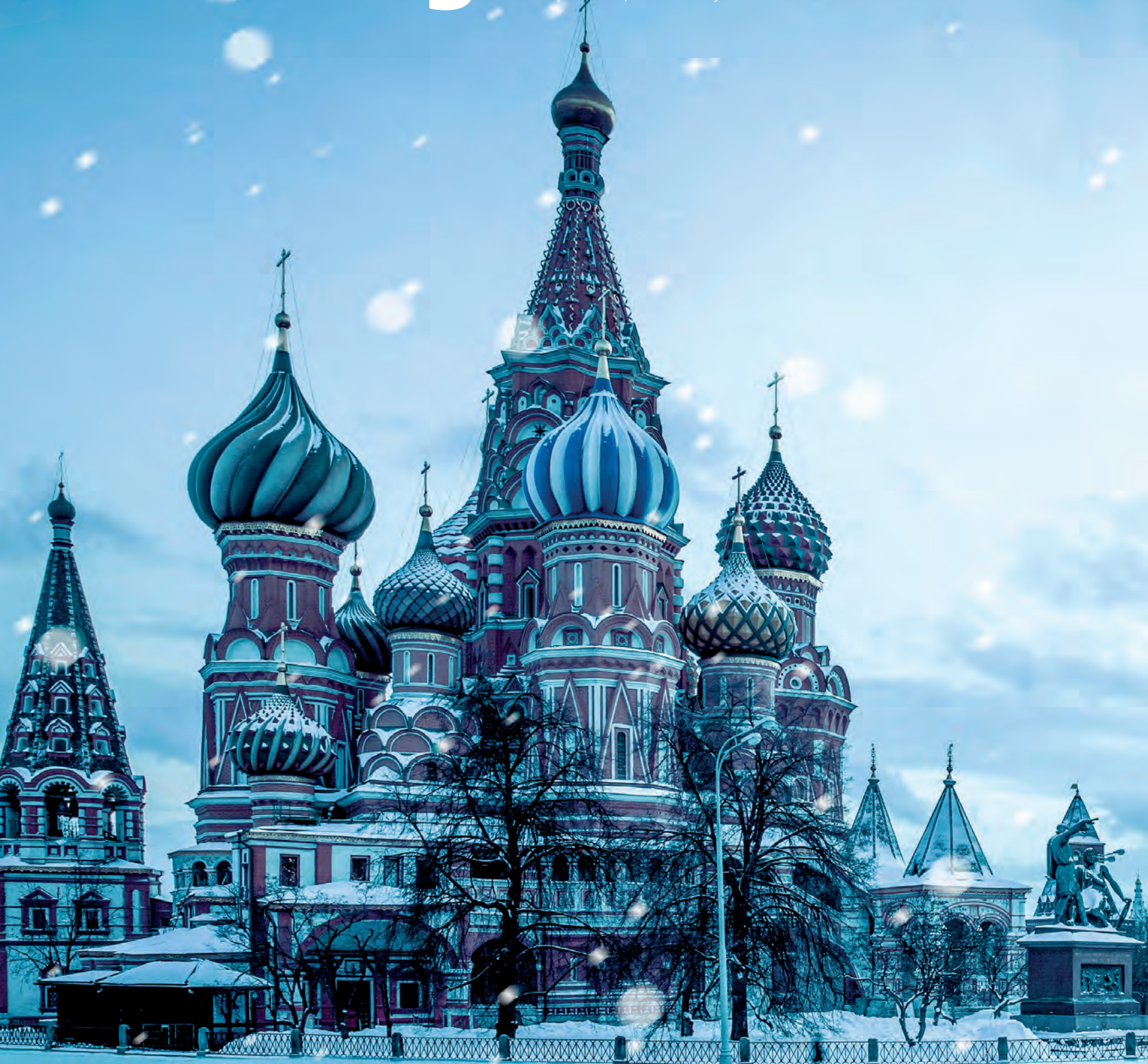


theJournalist

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Putin the boot in!

Using humour to defeat Russia's new tsar

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Russia can be a daunting place to be a journalist as the authorities tighten their grip and try to silence free-thinkers. But amid adversity there are always inspiring stories and people.

Team 29 in St Petersburg is one such group and our cover feature, written by Barney Cullum, looks at how a sense of humour and a clear sense of purpose keeps them going and keeps their work being read.

And sometimes it can be challenging being a journalist if you're a woman. In the wake of the #MeToo movement, Louise Tickle looks at sexual harassment in the media.

Steve Evans, the former BBC foreign correspondent, writes our Starting Out column on how he went from high-profile international broadcasting work to become a local reporter, indeed the only reporter, on a newspaper in a small community in Australia. He says it is one of the best things he's ever done.

We're also looking back in time in this issue with our regular media anniversary feature and also a piece by Bob Doran on how Herodotus, known as the father of history, could also be called the father of journalism.

And on that note, with time ticking away for 2018, Happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year!

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Attitude**
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Snoddy**
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and Steve Bell**
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Anger over Newsquest pay sparks strike in Cumbria

Journalists at Newsquest titles in

Carlisle, Whitehaven and Workington are to go out on strike on December 20th over pay.

Action will hit the Carlisle News & Star, the Cumberland News, the Workington Times & Star and The Whitehaven News. In Workington there was a 100 per cent vote for strike action and action short of a strike (with an 80 per cent turnout) and in Whitehaven 80 per cent voted for strike action and 100 per cent to take action short of strike action (with a turnout of 100 per cent)

Last month the chapel in Carlisle voted for action over the failure of the company to offer any pay rise. They have not had an increase since 2015 and only two rises in the past 11 years. NUJ members in Carlisle had a 100 per cent vote in favour of strike action on a 87.5 per cent turnout.

Newsquest has made more than a 100 people redundant since it took over the Cumbrian News Group in March and now staff

are being made redundant three days before Christmas. This has led to very large workloads for the staff remaining.

A spokesperson for the Carlisle chapel said: "Newsquest appears to have a business model based primarily on cost-cutting. Over the past year, the effect of this in our Cumbrian newsrooms has been dramatic. It has driven away most of our most experienced local journalists, whose professionalism and local standing has benefited the company – and our community – enormously. Collectively, their departure represents a catastrophic loss of experience and knowledge. The NUJ in Cumbria believes the journalists, together with colleagues in the commercial departments, are the primary asset of Newsquest's Cumbrian business. It is illogical for the company, while being prepared to invest in technology, to freeze the pay of its journalists indefinitely, as appears to be the case."



Newsquest appears to have a business model based primarily on cost-cutting. Over the past year, the effect of this in our Cumbrian newsrooms has been dramatic

Outrage over bail extension

The union's Irish governing body expressed outrage at the further bail imposed on Barry McCaffrey and Trevor Birney, whose film investigated the UVF massacre of six civilians in Loughinisland in 1994.

Their award winning film, *No Stone Unturned*, raised questions of collusion in the RUC investigation into the murders.

Members of the Irish Executive Council, some of whom travelled long distances to protest at



Musgrave police station last month when the bail was extended to March, were outraged that the police arrested

the journalists in the first place, let alone extended bail. Gerry Carson, joint cathaoirleach (chairperson) of the council, said: "The continued targeting of the two journalists by the police is simply unacceptable. Members stress that the Police Service of Northern Ireland should be concentrating on bringing the killers to justice, not arresting journalists who bring to light vital information that is in the public interest."

Jim Acosta joins Brighton branch

Jim Acosta, the CNN correspondent

who had his White House pass removed after questioning President Donald Trump closely, has agreed to become an honorary member of the NUJ's Brighton and Sussex branch. Brian Williams, branch secretary, said: "In Brighton and Sussex we wanted to demonstrate our support for a fellow journalist who found himself at the centre of an issue that affects us all – not least because Jim conducted himself

with such dignity, courtesy and professionalism throughout. So we invited him to join our branch as an honorary member.

"As you can imagine, we were thrilled when he accepted and we tweeted that we had just recruited a distinguished new member. It went gangbusters! According to Twitter, 100,000 people have seen that tweet. If they all turn up at our next meeting we're going to need a bigger room."



MEDIA PUNCH INC / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

inbrief...

CHANNEL 4 TO HAVE NEW BASE IN LEEDS

Channel 4 will set up a new national HQ in Leeds in an attempt to boost the way it reflects life outside London. The broadcaster will keep another headquarters in the capital, but will move about 200 of its 800 staff to Yorkshire. Leeds was chosen above Birmingham and Greater Manchester.

LETTS LEAVES THE MAIL FOR THE TIMES

Quentin Letts, the Daily Mail's parliamentary sketch writer, has left the paper after 18 years to join The Times, The Sunday Times and The Sun. He will write sketches, reviews and features for The Times, also appearing on its Red Box political podcast and at events for Times+ members.

MADELEY BECOMES AN AGONY UNCLE

The Telegraph has appointed broadcaster Richard Madeley as its new agony uncle. Madeley, who is best known for TV work with his wife as Richard and Judy, takes over from Graham Norton, who left in October after 12 years of answering readers' questions.

LEITH LEAVES THE EVENING STANDARD

London's Evening Standard has axed a long-running weekly columnist as part of cost cutting and an effort to refresh its comment pages. Sam Leith, also the Spectator's literary editor, began his column nine years ago.

CONDE NAST CHIEF EXECUTIVE TO GO

Bob Sauerberg, Conde Nast's chief executive, will leave his role to make way for a new global chief executive as part of a major restructure exercise. The reorganisation of the publisher of Vanity Fair, Vogue and New Yorker will include the US business merging with Conde Nast International.

inbrief...

TRUST FALLS IN TV NEWSREADERS

TV newsreaders have suffered the sharpest fall in trust over the past year among UK professions, according to a survey. The Ipsos Mori Veracity Index, which lists the most and least trusted professions, shows that trust in TV newsreaders 'to tell the truth' has fallen by five per cent to 62 per cent in 2018.

JOLIE AND DIMBLEBY TAKE REINS AT TODAY

Angelina Jolie, actor and campaigner, and David Dimbleby, the outgoing Question Time host, will guest edit Radio 4's Today programme for a day each during the festive period. In another holiday departure from the usual schedule, the subject of outer space will be explored in a themed edition.

DENNIS APPOINTS GRIFFIN AS CHAIR

Dennis Publishing has appointed former Tribune Publishing chief executive Jack Griffin as chair. Dennis was taken over earlier this year by Exponent, the private equity firm that created Gorkana. Griffin takes over from Mike Darcey, who spent a year as chairman.

WALES AWARDS GETS RECORD ENTRIES

The Journalists' Charity Wales Media Awards 2019 have attracted their highest number of entries. Nearly 240 submissions have been made in 21 categories - an increase of about 20 per cent on last year. The awards celebrate journalism made in Wales for a Welsh audience.

PAPER BREACHED PRIVACY GUIDELINES

The Thurrock Independent breached privacy guidelines by showing a woman's bank details in a video published alongside a story about fly-tipping, according to press regulator Ipso. Documents containing Jenna Cosentino's bank and insurance information were visible in the video, which was published on the website on July 17.

Isolation biggest issue for local democracy reporters

Local democracy reporters - journalists taking part in a BBC-funded initiative to fill a gap in the reporting of council and other public sector issues across the UK - are enjoying their work but also experiencing some problems, an NUJ summit has found.

The BBC funds the journalists as part of its latest charter commitments but they are employed by regional news organisations.

The BBC has reported that 144 local democracy reporters (LDRs) have been allocated to 59 news organisations in England, Scotland and Wales.

Stories written by the reporters are shared with more than 800 media organisations that have signed up to be part of the Local News Partnerships scheme.

The overwhelming problem voiced at the summit was that LDRs frequently felt isolated because their host local newspaper was unfamiliar with how the scheme should work. They reported that the BBC was reluctant to get involved, saying the LDR should discuss work matters with the

individual news organisation they were contracted to.

They also voiced concerns about their stories not being published quickly enough; that certain publishers preferred lighter stories and trivia; that they were not getting

attribution for their stories and that they were being asked to undertake work beyond the remit of their role - including by the BBC

One LDR said she had to fight to be issued with a mobile phone, while others said they struggled to be allowed to put taxis on expenses after attending late-night council meetings and sometimes felt vulnerable.

The LDRs reported that some relationships with council press officers had become difficult because they suddenly found their local authority under greater scrutiny than before because of their work.

A chapel has been started for Reach-employed LDRs and one is being set up by those working for JPIMedia. The NUJ is looking at how best to set one up for Newsquest.

If you are an LDR, you can contact the NUJ at ldr@nuj.org.uk.



Some relationships with council press officers had become difficult because they suddenly found their local authority under greater scrutiny than before

Merseyside agreement worth the wait

It has taken 10 years of negotiation involving four fathers and mothers of chapel and three officials but last month the NUJ's Merseyside chapel signed a new house agreement with Reach, which publishes the Liverpool Echo and other titles.

Chris Morley, the NUJ's northern and Midlands senior organiser, said the agreement was comprehensive, bringing the previous one from the 1980s up to date. He said: "The Merseyside chapel was never derecognised throughout the dark Thatcher days and beyond and, as befitting such a great working city, our members enjoyed a very good house



agreement that was jealously guarded by the chapel. But, over time, large elements became obsolete. It took us a long time to renegotiate the agreement but it was very much worth it."

Pictured from left Chris Walker (managing editor), Ali Machray (editor-in-chief) Mark Johnson (deputy FoC) and Chris Morley.

Radical Harry Richardson remembered

A meeting of Manchester NUJ recently remembered Harry Richardson, the first editor of the NUJ's journal and a general secretary.

He caused a theatrical storm in Manchester more than a century ago - at the same time he helped set up the union. Richardson, the NUJ's second general

secretary, was a radical playwright whose work was staged at the Gaiety Theatre. His play, *Gentlemen of the Press*, said journalists wrote pieces contrary to their own

views to 'put bread and butter on the table', which outraged the Manchester Guardian, which saw itself as morally superior to the 'yellow press'.

NUJ hits the road with a major recruitment drive

The union has embarked on a major recruitment drive to boost income. It has created a series of posters to highlight the benefits of NUJ membership and events have been held in a number of locations.

Last month, the Edinburgh freelance branch organised a meeting inviting students to hear a panel of speakers discuss how to make the transition from student journalism into the profession.

The event was chaired by Denitsa Tsekova, who is the student representative for the branch, and speakers included Sam Bradley, editorial assistant at The Drum, George Ward, a multimedia journalist and broadcaster, and Franchesca Hashemi, Yasmin Morgan-Griffiths and Jen Stout who together work for The Nine at BBC Scotland.

In London, young professionals and students hoping for careers in book publishing were targeted at the Society of Young Publishers' conference. The union had a stall at the event, where more than 200 delegates met to discuss the future of the industry.

Fiona Swarbrick, national organiser for

magazines, books, public relations and communications, spoke to delegates about the benefits of NUJ membership.

In Dublin, Irish organiser Ian McGuinness joined new union members at the inaugural chapel meeting of news website TheJournal.ie, where the NUJ ethical code of conduct played a central part in the discussions about what the union can do in a media workplace.

David Woods, who is the designer for The Journalist, produced the new posters. They cover a range of topics which include Pay, Ethical Journalism, Ending the Gender Pay Gap, Flexible Working, Be Part of a Collective Voice, Offering Support and Help, Diversity Matters, Press

Freedom, Respect at Work, Career Opportunities and Networking.

They can be used as part of the union's recruitment drive and individual branch and chapel campaigns. Download them from the resources section of the website.

Contact campaigns@nuj.org.uk for help with recruitment materials and if you require jpegs of the designs for use in social media.



Edinburgh freelance branch invited students to hear speakers discuss how to make the transition from student journalism into the profession

inbrief...

FACEBOOK FUNDS NEW JOURNALISTS

Facebook is paying £4.5 million to train 80 new community journalists. Those chosen for the Community News Project will be paid as they are trained by the National Council for the Training of Journalists and will work in regional newsrooms during a two-year programme.

FT OFFICES ARE SOLD FOR £115 MILLION

The FT's headquarters on Southwark Bridge, London, has been sold for £115 million ahead of the newspaper's move back to its former home in the City. Former FT owner Pearson sold the building to M&G Real Estate. The FT will move back to its old home of Bracken House in the middle of 2019.

COURT COVERAGE UNDER PRESSURE

Tristan Kirk, the Evening Standard's court correspondent, has warned that dwindling numbers of journalists are reporting from courts, with only two courts in London getting 'proper coverage'. He told the Society of Editors' conference that only the Old Bailey and Southwark Crown Court are well attended by journalists.

SHORTLIST GOES AFTER 10 YEARS

ShortList, a free men's magazine, has closed after more than 10 years in print as owner Shortlist Media rebrands as the Stylist Group, named after its free women's magazine. The group said it was putting all its efforts into Stylist.

CENTAUR PUTS THE LAWYER UP FOR SALE

Centaur Media is trying to sell The Lawyer magazine and financial services titles Money Marketing and Mortgage Strategy. The publisher appointed Livingstone Partners to advise on the sale of The Lawyer and Cavendish Corporate Finance are advising on its financial services division.

FT journalists pass no confidence vote

The FT's NUJ chapel has passed a vote of no confidence in the newspaper's chief executive John Ridding. The move

follows controversy over Mr Ridding's pay. After his £2.6 million remuneration was condemned by the FT chapel Mr Ridding returned

£280,000 of his £500,000 pay increase. The chapel accused Mr Ridding of losing touch with staff and FT values. It said

that in a speech to staff Mr Ridding did not mention his remuneration and that subsequent debate on the issue was limited.

Chapel bar takes to the stage

The Chapel bar, the restaurant and bar created in the refurbishment of the NUJ's head office in London's King's Cross, has reopened with a new tenant. The bar was forced to close in the summer when the hospitality company running it went into administration.

The new tenant is the Bread and Roses pub and theatre company, which runs the Bread and Roses pub in Clapham, south London. The pub and theatre operation are part of the Workers' Beer Company that runs bars at the Glastonbury festival and other events around the UK. It is in turn owned by the Battersea and Wandsworth TUC.

The bar's catering team will be hosting residencies for street food and pop-up food outlets so menus will vary. Bread and Roses will also start theatre performances at the Chapel bar in the new year under the name of The Chapel Playhouse.



inbrief...

BBC HIRES ISLAM AS ECONOMICS EDITOR

Faisal Islam, Sky News' political editor, has been appointed economics editor for BBC News. He replaces Kamal Ahmed who is becoming the corporation's editorial director, a new management role. Islam starts at the BBC in the new year. He was previously economics editor for Channel 4 News and economics correspondent at The Observer.

SITWELL'S VEGAN JOKE BACKFIRES

William Sitwell, a food critic who appears on Masterchef, left his role as editor of Waitrose's food magazine after he made a joke about vegans. In response to a pitch from a freelance writer about a series on vegan food, he suggested a series about killing vegans.

MORE GOOD TASTE FOR THE NORTH WEST

Jade Wright, a former Liverpool Echo journalist, has set up a food and drink newspaper in the north west to complement the quarterly magazine Good Taste. The free newspaper has a distribution of 25,000 in Merseyside, Chester, Lancashire and North Wales.

RASPBERRY PI STARTS MAGAZINE

Computer manufacturer Raspberry Pi has started a fortnightly magazine dedicated to video game development and video gaming. Wireframe magazine said it looks at how games are made, who makes them and how readers can make their own games.

FILM STORIES STARTS OUT WITH PRINT

Simon Brew, Den of Geek founder and former editor-in-chief, has launched Film Stories, a monthly print magazine focused on the British film industry. Brew, who raised £10,000 funding for Film Stories, said that he chose print as the format because he was a big fan of both magazines and long-form writing.

British journalist workforce expands 12% to 73,000

The number of journalists working in Britain has risen from 65,000 in 2012 to 73,000 now, according to a major report on the media industry by the National Council for the Training of Journalists.

The Journalists at Work report found that the practice of journalism has become much more varied, with fewer journalists working in traditional areas such as newspapers and magazines and more engaged in broadcasting and digital roles.

Journalists are also more confident about their trade than six years ago, according to Ian Hargreaves, professor of digital economy at Cardiff University and chair of the research project.

Professor Hargreaves, a former editor of The Independent and head of news at the BBC, said: "Journalists appear to be more confident in general, as indicated in answers to my all-time favourite question in these surveys which asks whether journalists would recommend their trade to a young person. This year, 62 per cent of journalists say yes to that, against 51 per cent in 2012."

More respondents hold a journalism qualification than in 2012, and the majority of journalists feel they have had sufficient training in ethical issues, the report found.

It also demonstrated a lack of diversity, showing that 90 per cent of journalists are white. Similarly, it identified concerns over

social class, with 72 per cent of journalists having parents who worked in a higher-level occupation, compared with 41 per cent of the overall workforce.

Joanne Butcher, chief executive of the NCTJ, said: "Although journalists are now more positive about journalism being an open and receptive profession, diversity remains a big issue. We are therefore increasing our commitment and allocating more resources to tackling the problem.

"We're working with leading employers to forge a new strategy for equality, diversity and inclusion, which also features ambitions to scale up the Journalism Diversity Fund and to attract and train more journalists in our local communities."



National Council for the Training of Journalists



"Journalists appear to be more confident in general ... 62 per cent would recommend their trade to a young person against 51 per cent in 2012"

Ian Hargreaves, Cardiff University

Shetland News readers rally for website

Shetland News, a hyperlocal news publisher that serves 23,000 people on the island, has launched a website paid for entirely by its readers.

Hans J Marter, managing editor and NUJ member, said: "A major upgrade of our website was essential to keep up with what is expected of a modern website design. Yet investing around £20,000 is a major challenge for a small company such as ours. There was no public funding available to help, so we decided to ask our readers."

The Shetland News supporters' scheme (<https://supporters.shetnews.co.uk>), launched in August 2016, was a success with more than 300 people supporting it with a small monthly subscription or by one-off donations.

The www.shetnews.co.uk site, which attracts 80,000 unique users per month, is financed by local advertising and publishes between five and eight original news stories a day.



Support for Johnston Press employees

The union has been working with staff and former staff of Johnston Press following the sale of the newspaper group to a consortium of lenders to

which the newspaper group owed money, led by American hedge fund, GoldenTree. The bond holders agreed to cut the £220 million debt to £85

million, put in £35 million in new cash and ditched Johnston Press's defined pension benefit scheme, which will now go into the Pension Protection Fund.

A virtual group for ex-staff affected by the hiving off of the pension scheme has been created. It can be contacted by emailing publishing@nuj.org.uk



Vigils held for Jamal Khashoggi

The union held vigils outside the Saudi Arabian embassies in London and Dublin to mark the death of Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudi journalist who was killed inside the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul in October.

Khashoggi, a former newspaper editor and editor in chief of a broadcasting channel, left Saudi Arabia in June 2017 to go into self-imposed exile in the US where he wrote for the Washington Post.

He wrote articles critical of the Saudi government and the country's crown prince and king and he had also opposed Saudi Arabia's intervention in Yemen. With nearly



He wrote articles critical of the Saudi government and had opposed intervention in Yemen

two million followers on Twitter, he was a high-profile commentator on Arab affairs. This year, he established a new political party called Democracy for the Arab World Now.

The vigils were held just before the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes against Journalists, a United Nations-recognised day to highlight the number of journalists killed around the world whose murders go unsolved.

The NUJ is working with the International Federation of Journalists to campaign for a UN Convention for the Protection of Journalists.

inbrief...

CADWALLADR DATA STORY WINS AWARD

Carole Cadwalladr has won the L'Esprit de RSF prize for her work showing how personal data was used in online electoral campaigns. Her investigation, published in The Observer, showed the power of digital platforms, especially Facebook, and examined the activities of data consultant Cambridge Analytica.

TODAY PODCASTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

BBC Radio 4's Today programme is launching a podcast with a 'different take' on the news to attract younger listeners. Beyond Today is presented by Tina Daheley and Matthew Price. It is staffed mainly by female journalists younger than 30 from across the BBC.

DAILY POLITICS DIGEST STARTS UP

Former Evolve Politics editor Matt Turner has launched a concise evening briefing on UK politics. The Communiqué UK briefing is released daily through Twitter and Facebook (@TheCommuniqueUK). A YouTube channel is planned for 2019.

ESQUIRE MAGAZINE CUTS FREQUENCY

Men's lifestyle magazine Esquire will move from being a monthly to coming out six times a year, and its cover price will rise from £4.35 to £6 from February 2019. Esquire UK, owned by Hearst, has a total circulation of just under 60,500, of which 28,500 magazines are free.

SHROPSHIRE WEEKLY NEWS TITLE CLOSES

Weekly news digest magazine Shropshire Weekly has closed after less than eight months. The Midlands News Association, which publishes the Shropshire Star, had struggled to achieve enough sales to sustain it. Shropshire Weekly, launched on March 2, and was aimed at people who did not have time to read a daily newspaper.

Jenny Sims reports on NUJ lobbying to help those with a devastating disease

BRAIN LIGHT / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



A call for better dementia care

When Bob Norris, a former NUJ assistant general secretary, died on October 12 aged 78, tributes poured into the union. His wife Pauline and son, Drew, colleagues and friends remembering the man, his work and the campaigns he championed.

This is not an obituary. It is the story of how his personal experience of dementia led to the NUJ campaigning for more than two years to help people get a diagnosis earlier and to receive better treatment and care.

This has included writing to the health secretary in England for more social care funding for people with dementia, making a submission to the Welsh government's consultation on its first Dementia Action Plan and encouraging Irish members to sign a dementia charity's petition to the Irish government for increased funding for community support and home care.

It began in April 2016, when Bob, on behalf of his Portsmouth branch, addressed more than 500 members at the NUJ's Biennial Delegate Meeting (DM) in Southport, where policies are proposed, debated, voted on and adopted or dropped.

Motion 62 called on the NUJ to lobby all governments for 'faster access to diagnosis and better services'.

The Alzheimer's Society says there

are more than 850,000 people with dementia in the UK, with numbers set to rise to one million by 2025; Ireland has 55,000, predicted to rise to more than 68,000 in 10 years. Norris and his supporters won the vote.

What happened next? For readers unfamiliar with the internal workings and structures of the NUJ (and there must be many), following a DM, all approved motions are allocated to one or more of the councils to deal with.

In its wisdom, the NUJ decided the dementia motion should be shared between the 60+ and the Equality councils. And, despite no extra budget for the work and few pairs of hands to do it, the 60+ council still agreed to make it their priority until the next DM.

The most sensible plan seemed to be to contact all the leading dementia charities in the UK and Ireland, examine their research and current lobbying campaigns, and offer support.

On the bright side, there is evidence of successful pioneering projects throughout England, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and Ireland. But everywhere, there are still problems with underdiagnosis or late diagnosis, and a need for better training for health and care professionals and better services, whether to enable people to stay in their own homes

NUJ members were asked for ideas by the Alzheimer's Society for a media guide on dementia. this is now available

for longer or to support those living in residential care.

In Wales, I met the policy director of Alzheimer's Cymru for a briefing, which helped me submit suggestions for inclusion in the Welsh government's Dementia Action Plan for Wales, 2018-2022, and later to comment on the draft document. These included improving rural services and a wider adoption of digital technology.

Over time, we've made contacts and built relationships with charities in England, Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland, which was the first country to publish a National Dementia Strategy. Scottish 60+ council member Ann Coltart and I attended a Scottish Alzheimer's Society's annual general meeting and conference and wrote reports for the NUJ's Scottish, Welsh and 60+ Councils.

In addition, as an affiliate of the National Pensioners Convention (NPC), which represents around 1,000 organisations with more than one million members in total, the NUJ campaigned successfully to get it to adopt 'lobbying for faster dementia diagnosis and better services' as policy.

As a result, Jan Shortt, NPC general secretary, recently wrote to Matt Hancock, England's health secretary, calling for more funding for dementia.

In another recent development, NUJ members were asked for ideas by the Alzheimer's Society for a media guide on dementia, and to comment on the draft document.

Published just a few weeks before Bob's death, the dementia-friendly media and broadcast guide has been approved by the NUJ's ethics committee, and is available on the NUJ website (www.nuj.org.uk/documents/dementia-media-guide-2018).

Sadly, because of his illness, Bob was unaware of many of these developments, but his family and friends can be proud that he made a difference, and that NUJ lobbying on dementia will continue.

A Just Giving page for donations to Alzheimer's Research has been set up in Bob Norris's name by his son. See: www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Bobnorris

Jenny Sims is joint chair of the 60+ Council and Wales member of the Freelance Industrial Council



Nick Inman calls on columnists to test out their arguments

Make the case against to back up your belief

Iwant so much to agree with you. You're a respected columnist or broadcaster. You have an expert opinion to pass on. You've thought it through and you are giving it me straight.

"The UK should leave the EU immediately," you say, "under any conditions." "The BBC is biased to the right (or the left)." "Free markets solve all problems." "Homeopathy is quack medicine that deludes the gullible." "Journalists should have unrestricted freedom to report what they want for the greater good."

I have an open mind. I'm listening. But I'm going to think as well, so make it good.

Because you are a journalist, you express yourself well. That's a given but that's also what worries me. You need more than a command of words to put forward an argument that shares ideas and moves debate forward.

If you don't apply a little wisdom, you will be wasting my time and yours. You'll confirm the prejudices of your friends and drive everyone else away. You only have to look at current politics to see where such polarisation leads.

There are formal rules to making a strong point but they all come down to one question you need to ask yourself: what if I am wrong?

Before you make the case for your diagnostic or prognostic, you must be able to make the case against. You must anticipate every objection. If you fear this is going to weaken your self-righteousness, your argument is probably no good. If you test your argument, on the other hand, you will almost certainly strengthen it – even if you have to modify it to conform with reality.

// You mustn't get suckered into starting with a conclusion and engineering the evidence to justify it. That's what ideologists do //

Most columnists don't seem to want to do this. The commonest mistake I see every day is for a writer to believe his or her beliefs are a true reflection of reality. They are not: we all rely on beliefs but they are never right a priori.

As journalists, we are vulnerable to the idea that an argument has to be all or nothing. We are faithful to the tyranny of the angle because it makes life much less messy. But you must not get suckered into starting with a conclusion and engineering the evidence to justify it. That's what ideologists do. They can never understand why balanced people question their workings out. One columnist recently went further than this: he gave better evidence against his argument than for it but still managed to reach the conclusion he had chosen.

Another easy way to gain a pyrrhic victory is to lump all your opponents together, like the national science editor who recently assumed that all people who speculate about intelligent design are creationists. Any ludicrous proposition put forward by one extremist can be assumed to be the opinion of everyone else in the camp.

Conversely, you should never assume you speak for anyone other than yourself, let alone everyone else: 'we-our-us' is a devious concept that tries to homogenise the opinions of those you consider to have common cause with you.

Many columnists go beyond certainty to prophecy. They are tempted to predict and even promise the future. 'If x then y,' they reason. This has an irresistible logic but it assumes you have all the variables of the universe under control.

Nuance, the conditional tense, tentative speculation, balance and judgment are sadly all becoming lost virtues in a world that just wants to hear ranting and denunciation.

Please, if you have space to express yourself in the media, be aware you enjoy a privileged platform denied to most mortals. Don't abuse it. Fake news is bad enough but, if we get fake argument as well, we are certainly lost.



For all the latest news from the NUJ go to www.nuj.org.uk

Welsh politics' toxic heart

The story of Carl Sargeant had a major impact on Welsh politics and on **Martin Shipton**

I can pinpoint with some accuracy the moment that covering Welsh politics changed irrevocably for me.

It was around 11am on 7 November last year. My phone rang and a distraught friend said through tears: "Carl has taken his own life".

He was referring to Carl Sargeant (pictured right), who four days before had been removed from the Welsh Government's cabinet by first minister Carwyn Jones following unspecified allegations of sexual harassment.

I let out an involuntary "What?" that mingled astonishment and anguish, and was heard across the newsroom.

It was an appalling and unexpected sequel to the shocking news of his dismissal the previous Friday.

I have been a journalist for more than 40 years and have been aware of a number of politicians over the years who have been notorious for their inappropriate behaviour towards women.

On one occasion, when I was a witness to blatantly gross behaviour, I reported the individual to his party. I was later assured that he had been given a warning, but months later he was promoted to a ministerial role.

Carl Sargeant was never on my list of sleazeballs. On no occasion did I observe him behaving in a lewd or suggestive way towards women. He was a champion of women's rights and a crusader against domestic abuse who piloted legislation to tackle it.

Women who knew him as well as men were shocked that no details of his alleged transgressions were given to him before he was sacked from his role in the cabinet and humiliated publicly by being suspended from the Labour Party in a way that was clearly inconsistent with the party's own sexual harassment policy.

No written statements from complainants were taken and, instead of referring Sargeant for investigation by a specialist civil servant, under the ministerial code (as Damian Green was by Theresa May), a special adviser was tasked with conducting a cursory ad hoc inquiry, the results of which did not stay in the government but were passed to the Labour Party.

For many sympathetic to Sargeant, natural justice appeared to have taken leave of absence.

At his funeral, mourners were urged to wear white ribbons in solidarity with domestic abuse victims – and as the sign of a pledge to do what they could to end violence against women.

Something did not add up. Over the months since Sargeant's death, there has been endless speculation about what happened in the days before he was sacked. Some evidence has emerged of collusion between individuals within government and others outside it in advance of Sargeant's sacking, but much remains unknown, leading to an atmosphere of suspicion and distrust in Welsh political life.

He was first elected in 2003, four years after the Welsh Assembly came into being. At the time of his death, I described him as an authentic working class politician – one of an increasingly rare breed.

I socialised with him and on occasions a group of us – all involved in politics in a number of guises – would go for a curry.

He became chief whip of the Labour group and then a minister, but he remained down to earth and unfailingly kind.

When I met him in his local Labour club in north Wales for the first time during one election campaign, he asked one of his team to walk me to the station so I would not get lost and could catch the last train to Cardiff.

Convivial as he was, I became aware of his vulnerability three years before he died when he told me during dinner at a friend's flat how he was being bullied by a senior government official. Implausible as it sounded, he convinced me that it was indeed possible for an official to bully a minister.

Unfortunately, neither Sargeant nor anyone else wanted to go on the record at the time, and he got cold feet when I produced a draft story about the alleged bullying.

I felt able to write and publish a piece about it after his death, as part of an effort to establish the truth.

Carl Sargeant's death and the circumstances that surround it continue to dominate Welsh politics.

Even when a story has no bearing on the late minister, the events of last November often conspire to impinge on it.

Former ministers and advisers have spoken of a toxic culture at the heart of Welsh politics. Personal relations between people who have been friends for years have been

put under strain in a way that previously would have been unimaginable.

Attempts have been made to nobble stories, sometimes with success.

Even though Carwyn Jones has announced that he will be stepping down as first minister later in the year, his role in the Sargeant affair remains under intense scrutiny. Those around him are sensitive to any negative publicity that may damage his legacy.

Underlying trust has broken down, despite a superficial attempt to maintain business as usual.

Before November 2017, things were very different. From an external point of view, Welsh politics was seen as the least interesting of the three devolved nations.

Scotland and Northern Ireland hold out to the English the unedifying prospects of independence and a return to terrorism.

Wales, by contrast, appears not to hold out very much, apart from the occasional sex scandal.

It simply does not have the leverage to cause significant trouble, which is one reason why the Welsh Government caved in to Westminster on the EU withdrawal bill 'power grab' issue while the Scottish Government continued to hold out.

Nevertheless, politicians and other players in Welsh civil society remain preoccupied with the status of Wales and the constitutional change they say is necessary to even up relations between the four nations of the UK.

Carwyn Jones had become the champion of a constitutional convention, one of whose remits would be to come up with workable proposals for a second chamber at Westminster to replace the House of Lords.

From time to time he made speeches that were well received by academics and the slightly wider Welsh civil society community.

The conundrum, of course, is how to come up with proposals that will be acceptable in England, which through sheer size holds all the negotiating chips, certainly in relation to Wales.

Without any leverage, Wales is in the position of permanent supplicant to its next-door neighbour, often mixing indignation with an appeal for fair play.

When Westminster says no – to electrification of the main railway line beyond Cardiff, for example – there are howls of disapproval from Welsh politicians who know they are impotent to do anything about it.

Never mind: the headlines in Welsh newspapers and packages on Welsh TV news channels play well with the local parties.

When Welsh political journalists are not reporting on the latest perceived insult from Westminster, they are grappling with the challenges of providing decent public services with limited funds in what is the UK's poorest nation.

At least that was the case until last November.



Relations between people who have been friends for years have been put under strain in an unimaginable way. Attempts have been made to nobble stories, sometimes with success



#MeToo in the

Louise Tickle on sexual harassment in the newsroom and how to tackle it



ou are protected from sexual harassment in the work place by the Equality Act 2010 – or so says the TUC's new guide on the subject The guide adds: "It does not matter how long you have worked for your employer or whether

you are a permanent employee, an apprentice or a trainee, on a fixed-term contract or supplied by an agency, you are still protected."*

In theory, but in practice? In the media, it doesn't always feel that way. In the wake of #MeToo campaign, while there is greater awareness of what behaviour is, and is not acceptable, female journalists are still experiencing harassment and discrimination.

"He was a senior editor. We got chatting in the pub and he was giving me careers advice," recalls Jenny Cooper. "As we were saying goodbye, he grabbed me and started snogging me, tongue down my throat, quite handsy as well. I tried to push him away twice. He went 'come back, come to mine', and you know, he was married, with kids ... I was like no, I can't."

Cooper, who was early in her career, was working casual shifts at a national news organisation, hoping for a contract.

"From that moment on, I didn't go to the pub any more because I was worried about seeing him," she says.

Quite apart from the stress and anxiety caused by his actions, there was an opportunity cost.

"I'd been told that no one ever got a promotion without going to the pub on a Friday, and I can see why because you can talk to people who you never normally speak to in the newsroom," she says. "You meet senior people as well as junior – it's really nice. And I just stopped going because I felt really uncomfortable."

Cooper did not want to see her assailant outside work and tried to avoid him in the office. Did he ever apologise? She laughs quietly. "He never really spoke to me again."

While in the end she did tell management what had happened and was impressed at how well she was supported, it seems "a lot of young women speak to other young women about harassment but they don't report, says Stephanie Boland, a Prospect magazine editor and a cofounder of The Second Source.

Set up by female journalists to combat sexual harassment and discrimination, The Second Source has held meetings, where, Boland says "it was striking how often the same reasons for not reporting kept coming up. "I won't be taken seriously'; 'he's more senior and more valuable to the company'; 'my contract is easier to terminate';" she says.

As Cooper found, when there are multiple allegations about one person, organisations find it easier to act.

Sexual assault can follow a period where a woman is

becoming discomfited at work. Journalist Noelle Jarvis still finds it hard to say the word 'rape'. But that is what happened a few years ago, when she was in her early 20s and a colleague 10 years older 'established a friendship of sorts'.

"He would start conversations about all the girls who were interested in him and ask a lot of questions about my personal life too, which I laughed off or made polite comments about," she recalls. "Retrospectively, I felt uncomfortable because I didn't know how to tell him 'this isn't an appropriate conversation and I don't want to have it'."

Jarvis says: "He ultimately forced himself on me" despite her repeatedly saying "no". Though she asked him to acknowledge what happened and apologise, "it was like getting blood from a stone," she says. "Eventually, I managed to drag [out] an irate sentiment along the lines of 'fine, I'm sorry if you felt like that'." She did not feel she could discuss such a deeply personal issue with anyone at her workplace, a news outlet with a culture she felt was concerned only with protecting senior staff. "It barely crossed my mind to think that anyone would care," she says.

The chair of Women in Journalism (Wij), Sunday Times editorial director Eleanor Mills, says that while her newspaper has taken a strong, explicit stand against sexual harassment and discrimination, several Wij events have uncovered a distressing picture.

"What was striking and upsetting is that [...] it wasn't so much the older men who were the worst perpetrators, it was

The advice from ACAS

The following is an excerpt from the ACAS guidelines on sexual harassment, which can be downloaded from www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=6078.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. It has the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of a worker, or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them. Something can still be considered sexual harassment even if the

alleged harasser didn't mean it to be.

- An employer should make clear to workers what sort of behaviour would be considered sexual harassment and that it is unacceptable.
- If a complaint is reported to police, or criminal court proceedings are being pursued, an employer must still investigate the complaint as an employment matter. An employer may then follow its disciplinary procedure, without awaiting the outcome of criminal

proceedings, provided this can be done fairly.

- Experiencing sexual harassment is often extremely emotional and distressing for the worker involved. This means an employer should make reporting such a matter as stress free as possible.
- It is also likely to be very distressing for a worker to be accused of sexual harassment. Whilst a fair and thorough investigation will need to be carried out, accused workers should also be offered support and sensitivity.

media

men in their 30s, who had grown up in the porn culture, laddish, entitled, who had the worst wandering hands and [made] comments,” Mills says. “We also heard about ‘misogyny noir’ – a really toxic kind of sexism [combined with] racism.”

In larger, more established newsrooms, Mills says she does not believe overt sexism and harassment happens now. She observes that having “a lot of very senior, strong women executives around definitely makes a difference – here we would stamp on it very fast”.

The less blatant tendency to diminish the capabilities of female journalists can also have a powerful negative impact on their status in the workplace.

“People saying, ‘oh, I won’t have birds on my big reporting project’ – that doesn’t happen,” says Boland. “But we hear things like women’s expertise being undervalued, for instance a woman bringing in great stories using her language skills but her job title and pay not reflecting that. Or you watch male colleagues rise through the ranks while equally talented women don’t.”

Professional mockery can be public and painful. One young female journalist recalls an April Fool spoof run by a rival publication that rubbished her editorship. “I’m northern and working class, and it referred to that, and essentially said I was a stupid woman,” she recalls. Her employer’s fury, she said, erupted not on her behalf, but “came from the humiliation of the publication, rather than anger for me”.

How has the experience affected her?

“Probably for the best to be honest,” she says. “It gave me fuel and fire, and I now see it as a sad, bitter old man who got pleasure from attacking a young woman publicly.”

Cooper now works at a national news outlet with strong, supportive female editors. Professionally, she is thriving, though she gets anxious when her assailant’s name crops up. She worries people will find out she reported him.

“Journalism is a small world, after all,” she says.

Jarvis, who still struggles to come to terms with how her trust was betrayed, says media companies must take active steps to let staff know inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated “then an environment might be created which lets people know how they should go forward”.

Rooting out misogyny in the media will need intervention, says Boland. The Second Source has been asking media outlets if they have harassment guidelines: “Many don’t but a lot are asking ‘how might we do that?’” she says. “You hope that through a combination of policy change, legal support and women supporting women, people will feel empowered.” (Some identifying details have been changed)

*TUC guide: Protection from Sexual Harassment
(<http://tinyurl.com/ybx9srwg>).



ILLUSTRATION: NED JOLLIFE

Resisting Russian

Team 29 is a unique Russian media platform which is run by journalists and lawyers.

Barney Cullum reports from St Petersburg

If you want to fight someone and win, first you have to be prepared to laugh at them, says Nikolay Ovchinnikov. The Team 29 editor has a mop of red hair and darting eyes, and a well-worn thumb knuckle is working independently, calming pulsing smartphone notifications. If hackers employed by the Russian government are indeed targeting the 29-year-old's emails and social media – as he suspects – they will have a job keeping up.

Ovchinnikov is alerted whenever an app called Gebnya – a Russian slang term that loosely translates as ‘bloody KGB’ – is downloaded from the Team 29 website. This happened more than 50,000 times in the first three months after its launch in April. Gebnya is mainly a platform for journalism but it also hosts a video game. It's a not-so-virtual world in which the central character has to stay one step ahead of state ‘tricks’ to bring him down (puppet judges, mercenary police and the like). The game instils confidence and a sense of resilience in Team 29's readers by laughing at the ‘bully’ state machine.

Away from the light relief, the ability to guarantee connectivity to empowering news and information was the serious, primary reason the spin-off app was developed. “It means that, if our website is blocked in Russia, we have somewhere else we can publish, which can be accessed offline too,” explains Ovchinnikov. “You can go to the protests, call Gebnya up on your smartphone and read the legal advice.”

The medium was designed in 2017 during a political climate in which appetite for protest against the Russian government was matched only by a blunt determination from the police to squash it. In St Petersburg, where Team 29 is based, protesters were forced to serve ‘administrative arrest’ for up to five days in cells with no bedding, according to Amnesty International. The human rights organisation described the pre-election crackdowns as ‘purposeful humiliation’.

Websites that do not peddle the government's party line can be temporarily blocked during sensitive periods. Journalists have been victims of assassination attempts too, although the Glasnost Defence Foundation, which monitors such attacks, has observed a marked decrease in suspected contract killings since 2010. Three incidents were recorded last year.

Vladimir Putin was re-elected just before the app could be rolled out. However, in Russia, it is rarely the president who is reviled but the country's wearying tradition of heavy-handed state control. “The number of people who want to live a life where the government doesn't touch them, doesn't interrupt their communications, doesn't go to their houses is growing,” says Ovchinnikov. “Six per cent of

the Russian population were the subject of state espionage in the first half of this decade. That's a very big number.”

In Soviet times, ‘enemies of the state’ could be sent to labour camps or executed. Things have improved, but that does not mean a civilised and satisfactory state of affairs. Educated Russians are aware of their rights to express themselves and to support political movements. Both were enshrined in the 1991 constitution established when the Russian Federation was born. Article 29, which allows the right to freely seek, receive, transmit, produce and distribute information, inspired Team 29's name.

The team's mix of lawyers and journalists is unravelling cases where people have been persecuted as a tactic to increase public loyalty, to the state's politics through fear. Its biggest success? Last year, Putin pardoned Oksana Sevastidi, a pensioner with no political history who had spent several years in jail after receiving a benign text message from Georgia, with which Russia had been at war. Ivan Pavlov, the lawyer who created Team 29, represented Sevastidi four years ago after being connected to her by a reader. Ovchinnikov then made people aware of the flaky closed-court verdict. His reporting and feature writing exposed the holes in the prosecution's case to the extent that it threatened to embarrass the government. “The president pardoned them only after we took this case, wrote about it and dedicated our lawyers to it,” he recalls with some pride.

Team 29 also publishes pre-emptive ‘how to’ pieces that arm readers with sufficient knowledge of the law and police-state culture to avoid detention. “Our structure is unique,” says Ovchinnikov. “In Russia, there are law firms that have a press secretary. But we are a team of three journalists and six lawyers. That structure hasn't been built elsewhere.”

“In Russia, ‘winning’ represents getting a fine rather than a prison term, whether you're guilty of any crime or not,” I am told. This goes for journalists and protesters alike. Team 29 is not scared of a crackdown, feeling its legal savvy and digital dexterity will keep it a step ahead of bent judges and state censors.

Young Russians' enthusiasm for such skills is reflected in the title's readership figures. Resonant articles are attracting 20,000 unique page views. Appetite can be measured by the donations that are flooding in. “We call them payments, not donations,” I'm corrected. “We cannot call ourselves an NGO any more [due to ‘foreign agent’ legislation introduced in Putin's previous term] so we cannot call what we receive donations either. But we get tens of thousands of euros from ordinary readers every month.”

Where does this leave questions about media imbalance? The west is fretful of the influence of quasi-state broadcasters such as RT (formerly Russia Today). Ovchinnikov laughs off the threat of propaganda, saying it is merely background noise in post-Soviet Russia. “When we hear that people are scared of Russia Today, we think it's very funny. No one among Generation Y watches television in Russia.”

The reality for young Russians is that Team 29 is just one progressive information source in

//
If our website
is blocked in
Russia, we have
somewhere
else we can
publish, which
can be accessed
offline too
//



n repression

a vibrant alternative media landscape. Together, they combine to make a mockery of the prevailing narrative that citizens are blinded by an all-conquering propaganda machine.

YouTube's political vloggers remain free of censorship and dominate influence, Ovchinnikov says. Then there are the news sites that emboldened the editor himself. These are led by NoyaGazetta, which has survived the alleged assassinations of several of its reporters. Growing in status is MediaZona, founded by a member of Pussy Riot. "We share information with all of them about our cases," he says, breezily. "They share information with us. We have a good connection with them. There is no comparison, no competition. We work together."

Politics may have few radical voices in Russia but journalism has an alliance of many.

Rewriting the rules

Russia has a rich history of writers wrestling censorship in creative ways.

The Team 29 offices are just a short walk from a former home of Fyodor Dostoevsky, the revered novelist and journalist.

The Crime and Punishment author was famously dispatched to a Siberian prison camp after joining a literary group, the Petrashevsky Circle, which discussed banned books critical of Tsarist Russia. Mikhail Petrashevsky, a friend of Dostoevsky's, wrote the Pocket Dictionary of Foreign Words so as to express radical ideas without being censored.

The pair "weren't rebels, they were dissidents," says historian Vera Biron. "Objectivity was always very important to Dostoevsky and he wrote what he thought. He didn't invite people to

destroy the regime. But he would tell the truth.

"In Russia, dissidents who think differently are always punished severely. It's our national tradition."

Where does it come from? Author Martin Sixsmith suggests the terrain Russian heads of state have to control, coupled with the length of its land borders, makes a level of insecurity inevitable.

Is expression becoming any freer? Prison awaits people who dare to suggest Crimea is part of Ukraine rather than Russia, as Shaun Walker – a Moscow correspondent first for The Independent and now for The Guardian – reminds us in The Long Hangover.

I wonder what Mikhail Bulgakov (pictured), one of Russia's most celebrated social commentators, would make of historical comparisons of censorship.

The Kiev-born journalist and author of Master and Margarita was born into a wealthy family but had a miserable 'career' of largely unpublished journalism, books and plays through the Josef Stalin years.

"Bulgakov tried to write like Aesop, using all manner of metaphors," says Peter Mansilla, director of one of two Moscow museums dedicated to the writer which opened after a thaw in censorship.

Even Bulgakov's writing set in the future was banned until the last years of the Soviet Union. It is all available and celebrated now. It is progress, although perhaps not a revolution.



Looking
back to:
.....
1927

Scoring the first try

Jonathan Sale looks at the unlikely team behind the BBC's inaugural sporting commentary

Lance Sieveking didn't know what the editor was talking about. A former First World War bomber pilot, plane crash survivor, ex-prisoner of war and now in 1925 a man looking for career advice, he was unfamiliar with the term 'cat's whisker' for the primitive radio he was gazing at, which consisted of an electric coil and two glass objects resembling light bulbs. The title of the editor's magazine was *Radio Times*, which was a clue, but not one Sieveking picked up. He slipped on the pair of earphones attached to the mysterious device and heard the sound of a piano. He asked if the music was coming from 'some kind of a gramophone'.

"No," answered the editor, "it is the programme coming from the British Broadcasting Company off the Strand."

Sieveking was still puzzled: "But how does it get here" – London NW5 – "with all the windows shut?"

That was how Sieveking described the unlikely start to a career, which saw him launch, among many groundbreaking programmes, the BBC's first sporting broadcast and become one of the maestros of the new media. The editor did not sign him up but, surprisingly, sent him along for a job interview with the great Mr John (later Lord) Reith, who asked sharply: "Are you exotic?" Guessing that to be the code for 'homosexual', Sieveking replied, truthfully, 'No.' In April 1926, he was taken on by the British Broadcasting Company (soon to be rebranded as Corporation).

"I had no qualifications," he wrote in *Airborne*, the autobiographical volume compiled by his son. (Paul Sieveking is the co-founder of *Fortean Times* and his extraordinary father, who claimed to have on two occasions extinguished a row of street lights by commanding them to turn themselves off, could have come straight out of 'the journal of strange phenomena'.) He found this to be a stroke of luck, as he could not be pigeonholed. Whenever a task turned up that

was above – or possibly below – the pay grade of the hard-pressed 18 other programme-makers, the solution was: "Tell Sieveking to do it."

For him, the cat's whisker became the absolute cat's whiskers. He produced the first multiple-studio radio drama and the first play for the (rudimentary) television service. And when the new concept of live sporting coverage came up, "I was told to get on with it."

The broadcast on January 15 1927 of the rugby international between England and Wales was the first in Britain about a team sport and the BBC's first sporting commentary of any kind. (Only one sporting commentary had been broadcast, on a boxing match, which went out on Station 2LO, a forerunner of the BBC.) There was therefore no existing pool of Ian Robertsons, however shallow, from which could be fished the man behind the BBC mike.

Sieveking, who did not even know the rules of the game, discovered this when he carried out auditions.

"Er, well, there's a – I should say, there's a – a little boy in a yellow-and-black jersey who's got the ball and he – no, er, he – that is, not the same boy," was the kind of thing he heard when he asked a star rugby writer to have a go at a commentary on a schoolboy match.

This journalist set the bar very low but none of the others he tried were able to get much higher. Finally Sieveking tried out a man named HBT ('Teddy') Wakelam, who had never written or uttered a word in public but possessed the advantage of having captained the Harlequins team of champion rugby players. And, to Sieveking's delighted ears, the advantage of having a delivery like a manic machine gun: "Go on, boy! Pass! NOW! He'd going for the line – he's over! It's a try!"

Sieveking now had his man. His next move was to ring up St Dunstan's, the home for blind ex-service personnel. Had they, he asked, a spare blind man he could borrow for Saturday afternoon? The idea was to remind the





Radio history made from scratch

Teddy Wakelam had no experience of commentating on a rugby match because no one had ever broadcast a commentary on a game. His BBC producer Lance Sieveking had no idea of the rules of rugby. Yet at Twickenham on January 15 1927 they made sporting and radio history, thanks to the machine-gun delivery of former rugby captain Wakelam and the broadcasting genius of Sieveking.

On the following Saturday, Wakelam scored another world first, this time for a commentary on a soccer game, Arsenal vs Sheffield. Having been a part-time tennis umpire, he was a natural choice for the Wimbledon commentator and

on August 8 was battling to adapt his quick-fire delivery to the more leisurely pace of a cricket match.

He became a regular BBC Jack-of-all-sports commentator. He was back at Wimbledon in 1937, now for the BBC's embryo television service.

Sieveking was also expanding

his repertoire to include other commentators and other sports.

He organised the BBC's coverage of the boxing at the Albert Hall, the Boat Race and, clinging on to the fork of a tree overlooking the River Cam, the Cambridge Bumps. The Derby and the Grand National followed.

In its very early days, the BBC did not broadcast live sporting events, so as to avoid 'unfair competition' with the newspapers. At the races, a broadcaster could not have revealed even the names of the winners; the most that could have been said into a mike was, "If you listen carefully, you may be able to hear the horses' hooves as they gallop past."



commentator that he was addressing an audience that, like the man from St Dunstan's, could see nothing of the game.

On the morning of the match a small hut ('ramshackle' according to Sieveking, 'rickety' in Wakelam's eyes) was seen to be perched on poles 20 feet above the pitch, like a cross between a Punch and Judy show on stilts and the crow's nest of a ship that had run aground. Wakelam and Sieveking scrambled up the improvised ladder, as did "a man named Lapworth, a general filler-in-of-pauses-when-necessary". (Charles Lapworth, a former editor of the Daily Herald, was described as being the Dr Watson to Wakelam's Sherlock Holmes.) The blind man was manhandled up this structure; health and safety regulations were presumably more flexible in 1927.

At 2.30pm, the broadcast kicked off with a few words from Sieveking, a man who didn't know the rules of rugby, followed by Lapworth, who didn't know them either (but was a whizz about American football) followed by a man who knew nothing about broadcasting (apart from the instruction pinned up in front of him: 'DON'T SWEAR').

Sieveking had persuaded the editor of Radio Times to print a half-page diagram of the pitch divided into eight squares; he now explained that he and Lapworth would be indicating the position of the ball by calling out the number of the relevant square. Lapworth took over the microphone, reading out the names of the players and chatting about the crowd.

It was Wakelam's turn when the whistle went at 2.45pm. Before the astonished eyes and ears

of his two colleagues, he poured out an inspired torrent of magical words. As Sieveking put it later: "The faster he talked, the clearer it was."

Of the game itself, Wakelam remembered nothing. Nor did Sieveking, except that the two hours were among the most exciting of his life – and he was, remember, a man who had piloted and been shot down in a biplane bomber. He was hard pushed to follow the ball as it whipped around the pitch, let alone blurt out the number of the square as a kind of footnote to Wakelam's staccato commentary. As he and Lapworth gasped out the relevant numbers in a haphazard sort of way, it seemed to the amused listeners following on their diagrams as if the teams were enormous fleas soaring over the pitch in giant hops. Reith rang up mid-game to demand more frequent square info, which did not help. He rang back later to say how pleased he was with their efforts, as did countless listeners.

Incidentally, England beat Wales 11-9.

Wakelam went on to commentate on other games and sports. Sieveking too went on to other sports then to radio plays and a bewildering variety of arts productions.

The match that saw the start of Wakelam's career as a commentator saw the start and finish of that of Lapworth, who returned to the world of print. This was just as well since, during a brief gap in Wakelam's well-informed commentary, Lapworth could be heard asking his colleagues, "Do they always play with an oval ball?" Many of us have asked ourselves that question – but not out loud, on air and while commentating on the first broadcast of a rugby international.

Starting Out

Steve Evans quit a top-flight career on TV and radio for reporting on a local paper in Australia



There just comes a moment when you know you have to move on. I'd had 25 fabulous years in the BBC as a correspondent in London, New York, Berlin and Seoul. I had covered unions as the BBC labour correspondent before labour correspondents went out of fashion. I had interviewed Angela Merkel (Kim Jong-un was saying no – his elevation to friend of the president of the United States of America was yet to be).

So I knew in 2017 that the best was behind me.

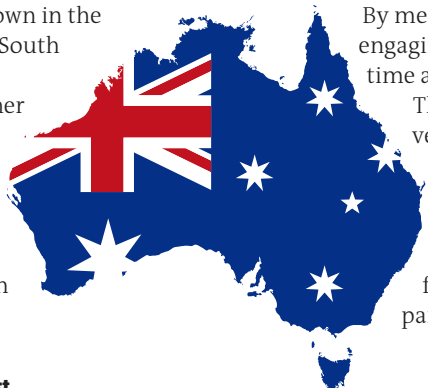
I had a choice. I could become one of those grumpy old men in the corner, moaning about how everything had gone to the dogs, and growling at the management fools who didn't realise that I should be presenting both the Today programme and the Ten O'Clock News.

Or I could jump.

I had a permanent resident's visa for Australia through marriage so I applied for every job on offer. Not a flicker of interest from the ABC but the Glen Innes Examiner needed a reporter/photographer/video journalist/tea-maker – so I took it.

Glen Innes is a very small, rough agricultural town in the north of New South Wales.

The Examiner had been its newspaper since 1874 and it was my task to serve the town and the



newspaper as the tsunami of the internet engulfed it.

It is the hardest and also perhaps the most satisfying job I've ever had.

I came to realise that I had lived in a media bubble for decades. I am reminded of the quote said to have come from playwright, Arthur Miller: "How can the polls be neck and neck? I don't know anyone who's voting for Bush."

Glen Innes would have voted for Bush and Trump and Brexit and then gone back and done it again.

The people there are descended from the settlers who moved onto Aboriginal land in the 1840s and that brutal side remains. They tell it like it is – and often just as forcefully like it isn't – nose to my nose.

I have had the paper waved angrily in my face and been called an idiot. A man caught with a loaded gun came and told me I had made him look like a criminal by putting his criminal conviction in the paper.

And I have had high praise and made great and lasting friendships.

I have met more interesting people in a year in Glen Innes than I had in the previous 10 as a national and international journalist.

By meeting, I mean really engaging with them, spending time and getting to the core.

There is the Vietnam veteran who still has nightmares after being attacked by an American helicopter gunship. He had earlier seen his best friend shot – they were partners as scouts in the

jungle and they had tossed a coin to see who would go through a clearing first. The friend lost and was hit by a sniper.

Several women confided how they were virtually imprisoned by husbands on immense farms but finally had the courage to walk away.

That openness comes from being trusted in a small community.

Small-town journalists have a contact with people that bigger-time journalists rarely do, and that is very valuable.

Glen Innes is not a world of political correctness but it is a world of humanity and kindness. Its values are very different from those in the cosmopolitan media bubbles of uniform opinion, and it is all the better for that.

Earlier this year, I moved to the Canberra Times because I feared for the Examiner's future.

In the week I left, the Glen Innes paper coincidentally decided to shut the office after nearly 150 years. My successor will work from home. It is to my mind a tragedy.

I have learnt how local and city papers are a foundation of democracy. When and if they go, the crazies on Facebook will have the field to themselves.

The local journalists fighting to save papers are true heroes. I am proud to have jumped and become one of them.

Local and city papers are a foundation of democracy. The local journalists fighting to save papers are true heroes

@EvanstheAirwave

Minister should force the polluter to pay, says **Raymond Snoddy**

Only tough action will keep local press afloat

The vagueness of culture secretary Jeremy Wright on possible help for local newspapers did not exactly go down well at this year's Society of Editors' conference.

There was a process to be observed. The Cairncross Review, chaired by Dame Frances Cairncross, was already under way.

As a lawyer and former attorney general, Wright wanted to hear what the review into the "sustainability of high-quality journalism in the UK" had to say before drawing any conclusions.

It was important, he argued, to ask not just the right questions but to ask them in the right order.

Well, yes, that is indeed the rational approach, but such cool neutrality seems like cold comfort for journalists losing jobs now, and for newspapers moving ever closer to the edge.

We have had royal commissions and inquiries into the future of the press since the 1940s, many involving standards of behaviour and of regulation, but this one is different.

The outcome could be an existential matter for many newspapers. As the report on the state of the press, published before the Cairncross review results found, more than 300 local papers have closed in the past decade.

In the same period – the 10 years to 2017 – the report found that the number of 'frontline' local journalists had fallen from 23,000 to 17,000 and the total will be less again following this year's toll.

The result is a rising number of communities, courts and councils without adequate or even any journalistic coverage. As Press Gazette has highlighted, Long Eaton in

Derbyshire, a town of 45,000, has no dedicated local reporters on any platform. Half of London boroughs have just one reporter covering their affairs.

We will never know whether the Grenfell tragedy could have been averted if earlier standards of newspaper staffing and coverage had prevailed.

It is very late in the day to be having a review into the 'sustainability' of high-quality journalism – certainly in the local and regional context.

It will be scandalously late if the government, in the midst of the Brexit maelstrom, fails to take immediate action – and the only action that will make a meaningful difference will involve money.

A government decision to take back some of the £750 million a year hit the BBC will face from having to fund free licences for the over-75s from 2020 would help. In return, the BBC would use any savings to fund journalism – not just for the corporation but to extend the promising scheme that has already put 150 'local democracy reporters' on the ground.

You can tinker at the edges with a regime of tax breaks for newspapers, but something far more dramatic is now necessary.

On the principle that the polluter pays, the social media giants – which have done so much to undermine the economics of traditional publishing and share an aversion to fair rates of taxation – should be made to pay.

The scheme revealed by the Sunday Times whereby Facebook would help fund the training of reporters to get more out of social

media appears to be little more a fig leaf designed to head off stiffer regulation.

The evidence suggests that, with the tech billionaires, voluntary doesn't work.

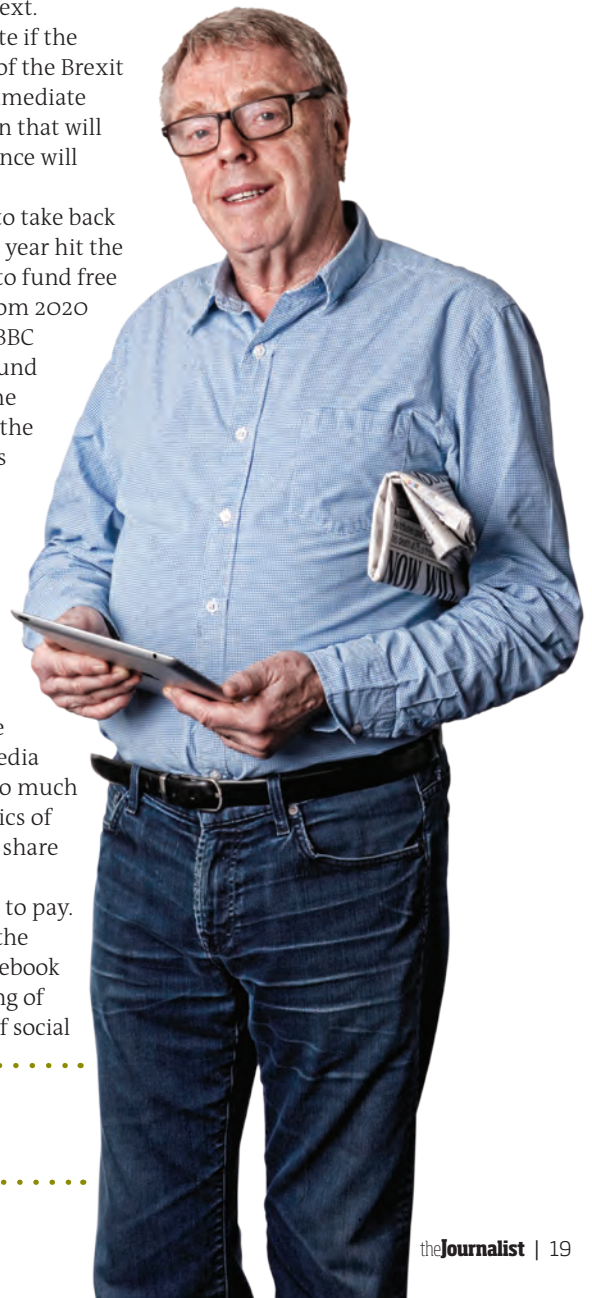
Damian Collins, who chairs the digital, culture and media select committee, can attest to the repeated failure of Facebook cofounder Mark Zuckerberg to come before his committee to give evidence.

A tax on digital advertising would get the attention of the likes of Zuckerberg with the proceeds going to a fund to pay for "sustainable quality journalism".

The online editions of print publishers would naturally be exempt.

For Jeremy Wright, the time has come to get off the fence.

//
The scheme whereby Facebook would help fund the training of reporters appears to be little more than a fig leaf designed to head off stiffer regulation
//



 For the latest updates from Raymond Snoddy on Twitter follow @raymondsnoddy

arts with attitude

Some of the best things to see and do with a bit of political bite

For listings email: arts@NUJ.org.uk

Books

Condom Dave, Theresa the clown and the rise of Corbyn



It's a mark of the esteem in which Steve Bell holds the NUJ

that the cover of his latest book is a cartoon he drew for this publication.

This time last year, the satirist's image of Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn as Jesus Christ, standing above a collection of crusaders carrying newspapers containing anti-Corbyn headlines, adorned our cover.

It is now on the front cover of his new book *Corbyn: The Resurrection*.

"I liked it," he tells Arts with Attitude. "I had to do a book, so I tried various things and they didn't quite work and then I came upon the cover. It was a good one and deserved to be taken further, so I used that as a springboard for the book. It was good to give that drawing some more legs."

The London Freelance Branch member enjoys working for the NUJ. "I don't have a great variety of

outlets. The Guardian and the Journalist is about it. I'm a creature of habit", he says.

"I don't know how bloody long I've been drawing for the Journalist," he laughs. "I've been an NUJ member for probably 40 years as a freelance member, so maybe 30 years? I worked under the previous editor, Tim Gopsill, and have carried on under Christine Buckley.

"I get a free hand in both papers, and enjoy drawing about our noble trade. I don't get any complaints from members about my work in the Journalist because it's the owners who are my targets. The ownership structure of the British press goes a long way to explain the fatal flaws of our trade."

His book shows his vision of a turbulent three years - two general elections, Brexit and two Labour leadership contests - and features characters such as Condom Dave and Theresa the clown alongside the old favourites, the Falklands penguins and Monsieur L'Artiste.

"Spare a thought for the left-wing satirist. How on earth can I attack Jeremy Corbyn when I find myself agreeing with most of what he says?" he writes in the introduction.

"What he has done is successfully challenge the comfortable consensus on the economy. This has been achieved in defiance of a coordinated and relentless media campaign to delegitimise and vilify him."

<https://guardianbookshop.com/corbyn-623295.html>



by **Tim Lezard**

Books: Xmas special

In Extremis

Lindsey Hilsum

Channel 4's international editor Lindsey Hilsum tells the story of her fellow foreign correspondent Marie Colvin, recognised as one of the bravest and best in her field.



Hilsum draws upon unpublished diaries and notebooks, and interviews with Colvin's friends, family and colleagues to tell the story of the life of a woman who defied convention. See 'A Private War' opposite page for information about a forthcoming film about Marie Colvin's life.

<http://tinyurl.com/ydzyfwmm>

Reporting Bad News: Negotiating the Boundaries Between Intrusion and Fair Representation in Media Coverage of Death

Sallyanne Duncan and Jackie Newton

Based on extensive academic research, this book looks at the death knock and the poor reputation it has following the Manchester Arena bombing, Grenfell and Hillsborough, writes NEC member Professor Chris Frost.

The authors hope to challenge this pervading view by exchanging insensitivity for good practice. With this book on your bookshelf and its advice in your mind, there will be better reporting of tragedies, allowing the public better understanding of the reality of disasters and the bereaved a better chance to commemorate their dead.

<http://tinyurl.com/y8qass9e>



Breaking News

Alan Rusbridger

The former Guardian editor offers his own observations of the past, present and future of the press, looking at how the news media has been disrupted by social media giving billions of people access to publish their own material. Fake news? I don't think so.

<http://tinyurl.com/y9syv7uh>

Reporting The Troubles: Journalists Tell Their Stories on the Northern Ireland Conflict

Compiled by Deric Henderson and Ivan Little

Billed as a landmark social history of the Troubles, this book publishes moving accounts from some of the biggest names in journalism, including Kate Adie, Martin Bell and Nicholas Witchell. The editors say they have gained a deeper understanding of how their experiences in Northern Ireland had a lasting impact on the journalists involved, both professionally and personally.

<http://tinyurl.com/yc9jqrak>

Pompey Writes: the Best of Star & Crescent (So Far)

Edited by Tom Sykes and Sarah Cheverton

Featuring the best content from Portsmouth's only independent non-commercial news, culture and commentary website, plus material never before published, this gem includes fiction, investigative journalism, travel writing, satire, graphic design and photography.

<http://tinyurl.com/yasbwnd6>

Yr Awyr yn Troi'n Inc
Martin Huws

Former BBC Cymru father of chapel Martin Huws has

published a collection of short stories which were highly commended in a National Eisteddfod competition. The collection, *Yr Awyr yn Troi'n Inc* (The Sky Turns Into Ink) is written in Welsh and published by Gwasg Carreg Gwalch.

Most of the 30 stories are set in Cardiff. The main characters are life's losers, wounded and abused characters, experiencing physical and mental illness, who have not reached their potential or ambitions because of the blight of loneliness.

<http://tinyurl.com/yb7wt75w>

Theatre

Ian McKellen on Stage: Tolkien, Shakespeare and You!

UK tour, January 25-September 15

Ian McKellen celebrates his 80th birthday next year by taking a new solo show to

theatres up and down the UK. The show will start with Gandalf, he says, and will probably end

up with an invitation to join him on stage. An opportunity to see a legend of stage and screen in an intimate performance.

<http://tinyurl.com/yc4zcy75>

All My Sons

Old Vic, London

April-June 2019

With President Trump seemingly determined to go to war with someone somewhere, this 1947 Arthur Miller classic is a reminder of the personal consequences of state action.

Based on a true story of how aircraft manufacturers conspired with army officers to approve defective aircraft engines destined for military use, this blistering drama shows the American dream come crashing down. It stars Sally Field, Bill Pullman, Jenna Coleman and Colin Morgan.



Television

Original look at Les Misérables

It's not often I get excited by television, but I'll make an exception for the BBC's forthcoming adaptation of *Les Misérables*.

One of my favourite novels, this epic tale of crime, love and redemption is set against a backdrop of civil unrest in 19th century France.

It has been turned into a six-part drama by multi award-winning screenwriter Andrew Davies, and stars Dominic West (Jean Valjean), David Oyelowo (Javert), Olivia Coleman (Mme Thénardier) and Lily Collins (Fantine).

Davies, perhaps best known for *House of Cards*, has vowed to go back to the original novel and delve deep into the many layers of Victor Hugo's story, revelling in Jean Valjean and Javert's cat-and-mouse relationship.

The BBC's press office says: "With a striking intensity and relevance to us today, the novel is testimony to the struggles of France's underclass and how far they must go to survive."

"The adaptation will vividly and faithfully bring to life the vibrant and engaging characters, the spectacular



and authentic imagery and, above all, the incredible yet accessible story that was Hugo's lifework."

If the production matches Davies' versions of *Vanity Fair*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Middlemarch* and *War & Peace*, it promises to be a cracker. It is due to air early next year – set a reminder on your tellybox.

www.oldvictheatre.com/whats-on/2019/all-my-sons

Music

Guttfull

If you were into Riot Grrrl back in the day, then you'll love Guttfull, who are bringing the genre up to date.

Described as dirty sax punk, and drawing comparisons with Bikini Kill, the Undertones, X-Ray Spex and The Slits, their songs address issues such as internet abuse (Keyboard Warrior), sexual harassment (#notallmen) and Donald Trump (Arsehole).

<https://guttfull.bandcamp.com/music>



Comedy

The National Trevor Tour

Sandi Toksvik

UK tour, January-February 2019

The Great British Bake Off host thinks being called a national treasure is a bit

embarrassing, so she has decided instead to become a National Trevor – half misprint, half Danish comedian, novelist, actor and broadcaster. Expect tall stories, funny facts and silly jokes.

www.sanditoksvig.com

Film

Colette

On general release from January 11

Who would have thought intellectual property could be so sexy? Dominic West and Keira Knightly star in this film about a woman who ghostwrites her husband's best-selling novels, then wants her authorship to be recognised.

A true story set in early 1900s Paris, this feature looks at Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette's drive to overcome societal constraints, revolutionising literature, fashion and sexual expression.

www.bleeckerstreetmedia.com/colette



A Private War

On general release from February 1

Rosamund Pike stars as celebrated Sunday Times war correspondent Marie Colvin. The film looks at the personal cost of her work – she paid the ultimate price when she was killed in Syria in 2012. A remarkable tribute to a remarkable journalist.

www.imdb.com/title/tt2368254/

Poetry

Burns Night

Everywhere in Scotland (and beyond), January 25

The perfect combination of haggis, whisky and poetry, Burns night was first held in July 1801 when nine of the great bard's friends got together to mark the fifth anniversary of his death. The night included a meal, performances of his work and a speech in his honour. It was such a success they decided to hold it again but in honour of his birthday.

www.visitscotland.com/blog/scotland/burns-night-guide/

Spotlight: women behind and in front of the lens in Wales

Photography pioneers and practitioners

Women in Focus

celebrates the role and contribution of women throughout the history of photography – behind and in front of the lens.

Coinciding with the centenary of the

Representation of the People's Act 1918, which gave some women the vote, the exhibition looks at female photographers in Wales from pioneers to contemporary practitioners.

It also explores how

women as subjects, from intimate and playful 19th century staged family portraits to contemporary portraiture, fashion and journalism. The work also considers how photography has been used to

misrepresent women through objectification and idealisation.

As Janice Lane from the National Museum in Cardiff says: "Women have been active adopters and practitioners of photography since it was invented in 1839. Historically, their work

has not been as broadly supported, accessed and understood as that of their male counterparts."

This goes some way to righting that wrong.

National Museum Cardiff Free, until January 28
<https://museum.wales/cardiff/>



Your Say...

inviting letters, comments, tweets



Please keep
comments to
200 words
maximum

Email to:
journalist@nuj.org.uk
Post to:
The Journalist
72 Acton Street,
London WC1X 9NB
Tweet to:
@mschrisbuckley

TIM ELLIS



Too many bodies and too much talk in NUJ

Kevin Palmer asks if we can declutter the NUJ (October/November). He questioned whether we need so many bodies within the union and whether branch responsibilities have to change.

The NUJ's democratic structure includes a general secretary, a lay president, a vice president, an honorary treasurer and 29 executive members, four regional councils, five industrial councils, a photographers' council, four equality councils, a health and safety committee, a professional training committee and The Journalist's editorial advisory board.

Too many bodies, yes, and also too many members per council.

This is compounded by our membership's ability, because words are our business, to articulate the hind leg off a donkey. Whether all this talk makes for good decision making is doubtful.

Also, the time sent by staff serving the councils and the financing of the meetings could be better used.

The working demands of journalists, especially because of online publishing, mean that branch meetings don't or can't draw a crowd, or sometimes even a quorum.

Surely the answer is online union communication and a system tailored for geographical or sector branches. This change of responsibilities would mean a change of branch officers' duties. This all might rouse members every six months to an actual meeting.

Roy Jones
North Wales Coast branch

£30
prize
letter

equally legendary leader of the TGWU, enraged Brenner when he said the German system of having workers on boards was 'collaboration with capital'.

There is a self-serving myth that Britain and the TUC somehow shaped postwar German trade unions. It would have been far better if the Germans had come over and reorganised British unions along lines that served the working class.

Denis MacShane
London

Music journalism is very much alive and kicking

I am afraid that Joely Carey (Bright allure of the 'dark side', October/November) is indulging in a bit of negative PR when she claims 'music journalism is dead' and says there isn't a 'thriving music publication'.

I suggest she reads the recent article in the Guardian by Dave Simpson, music journalist and lecturer at the University of Huddersfield, 'What crisis? Why music journalism is actually healthier than ever' (24 October).

There are now more music publications than ever with some moving from online back to print with, yes, smaller circulations but they are actually now making a profit.

There may be more jobs in PR, as my former colleague Jenny Gibson notes in the article but, as I have always argued, it is still a 'lie machine'.

Dr Stephen Dorril
Holmfirth

Is the code of conduct more than virtue signalling?

Looking at the 12 bold principles on The Journalist's back page, I found myself wondering what makes them constitute a 'code of conduct'.

Is that code ever enforced? Has the NUJ ever disciplined a member for eg intruding into private grief or accepting inducements to do a story? If not, these principles amount to nothing more than virtue signalling and in a field where there is sometimes no virtue to signal.

Paul Moss
BBC Radio News

German model would have been better for our unions

Thanks to Paul Routledge for a great piece on the TUC's 150 years (150 not out, October/November). But his claim that the 'English model was exported to Germany' in 1945 is a myth.

German workers looked with horror at the multiplicity of trade unions in every UK workplace – 14 different unions in a car plant or, when Paul and I started our careers, 10 unions in a newspaper.

The German rule was one industry, one workplace, one union. Bargaining was done at a regional level with employer federations, never at company level.

Workers in plants were represented by fellow employees elected to works councils, not shop stewards or outside union officials. Worker representatives sat on company boards in a system introduced by the Christian Democrats in 1950.

There were only 14 trade unions in Germany compared to 70 in the TUC when I took out my NUJ card. The biggest was IG Metal, which had more than four million car, steel and metal industry workers.

The legendary founding president of IG Metal was Otto Brenner, who spent 13 years in Buchenwald under Hitler because of his opposition to fascist nationalism. At an international trade union conference Jack Jones, the

Paul raises an interesting point – what does make a code of conduct? A code should be short and clear so it can be remembered and easily applied. The BBC's editorial guidelines are great but I bet Paul doesn't know them all – yet he should.

Codes should be enforceable and ours is. We take complaints and hearings are held – see union rule 24. Members in breach of the code can be fined or expelled.

We can take complaints only from members and that limits how many we get. However, I am a great believer that encouragement is the best way forward and that that is done by education (virtue signalling, if you don't believe in education), not punishment.

Professor Chris Frost
Chair, NUJ ethics council

Gardaí photography ban has many implications

Re the article about photographing the police/gardaí (Minister supports ban on photographing gardaí, October/November), I would like to add a few considerations.

How would photographers and broadcast members cover the 'good news' angle (like new appointments, promotions and award winners) if there were a ban on photographing police personnel?

How could public servants, including the police/gardaí, have an expectation of privacy when they are working in the public forum as public servants?

What would prevent cameras and broadcast equipment from being stolen/seized/confiscated and held indefinitely thus depriving members of their very livelihood?

I'm sure there are other opinions that would surface should such a daft proposal be entertained, including the freedom of the press and human rights protection that prevent the imposition of fascism by incompetent representatives.

Ian McCabe
County Cavan

Congratulations on crowdfunding coverage

I am moved to write to you in the hope of £30 for consultancy from the Horrabridge Times, which is doing quite well by ignoring most advice on online publication and catering for people who miss a good read in their local paper.

Congratulations to Nick Wallis for his interesting idea of crowdfunding a court watch, and for picking up on the scandalous treatment of sub-postmasters, which I recall being a potential story back in the days when we were all still inclined to accept official assurances about the reliability of computerised identification of fraud.

Another matter I would like to raise again, from the perspective of a retired hack who can no longer tear up a tenners' worth of newsprint a day, is the poor quality of online services for Kindle readers.

twitter feed

Tweet us your feedback: [@mschrisbuckley](https://twitter.com/mschrisbuckley)



Katie Mallinson (@ScribaPR)

28/10/2018, 12:57

A great Sunday read about the rise of trained #journalists working in #PR, by our own talented ex-journo & university lecturer [@JennyGibson](https://content.yudu.com/web/3pylg/OA3pylh/TheJournalistOCT18/html/index.html) (via the [@NUJofficial](https://content.yudu.com/web/3pylg/OA3pylh/TheJournalistOCT18/html/index.html) magazine) <https://content.yudu.com/web/3pylg/OA3pylh/TheJournalistOCT18/html/index.html>



Francis Sedgemore (@hesgen)

22/10/2018, 15:57

Read this letter from photographer John Walmsley in the [@NUJofficial](https://content.yudu.com/web/3pylg/OA3pylh/TheJournalistOCT18/html/index.html) magazine, and dare tell me that digital photos are free for the taking (and republishing without permission or payment). People's livelihoods depend on #copyright protection. [pic.twitter.com/s6GBgOPhD](https://content.yudu.com/web/3pylg/OA3pylh/TheJournalistOCT18/html/index.html)

I complained about it on this page a while ago but the problem of missing pictures and poor picture presentation – especially of the cartoon of the day – continues. I could use a laptop, of course, but the Kindle is a useful reader and publishers all recognise it as a useful medium, so why has nobody yet explained, let alone addressed, this flaw in the product?

Chris Benfield, Devon
www.horrabridgetimes.net

Article sub-heading was misleading

Thank you for printing my article Trial by Crowdfunding in the The Journalist

(October/November 2018).

Unfortunately the sub-heading 'Nick Wallis thought the treatment of subpostmasters was scandalous' was not a true reflection of the content of the piece. Other people have called the treatment of subpostmasters a national scandal and I have reported their words.

I set up the crowdfunder because I think this is an important story that deserves as much public attention as possible. I am not in the business of taking sides. I would be grateful if you would publish this letter as a means of correction.

Nick Wallis

STEVE BELL

THE OWNERS





Bob Norris

Tributes have been paid to Bob Norris, retired assistant general secretary of the NUJ and union member of honour, who has died aged 78.

Bob's service to the NUJ began early in his career when he served as a chapel officer. In 1965, aged 25, he became the youngest member of the national executive council.

He also served as an industrial official in several sectors and had a commitment to painstaking detail that was appreciated by members. He worked in the book sector for 30 years and, as the freelance organiser, was proud of the part he played, with Anne Bolt, in achieving the UK Copyright Act 1988.

As assistant general secretary, then the number three position, Bob enjoyed the cut and thrust of meetings. He also appreciated the social aspect of the role, being fond of beer, banter and good company.

He had a special interest in education and training and believed that education was key to promoting journalistic diversity.

He served on the board of the National Council for the Training of Journalists for 39 years, stepping down in 2006. A strong supporter of Writers in Prison, Bob was an advocate of second chance education. He was also a relentless campaigner for media freedom.

Michelle Stanistreet, NUJ general secretary, said: "Bob is one of our NUJ legends who, throughout his life-long membership, played an enormous role as an activist and as an official during his service as assistant general secretary. Always keen to enlarge the NUJ family, Bob spent many years after he retired from work continuing to recruit and build strength and solidarity in our branches and workplaces."



Eric Clark

Eric Clark, who has died aged 81, was a fine investigative journalist and the author of 10 books.

He was also among Observer journalists who set up the paper's first NUJ chapel in the late 1960s. The paper was owned and edited by David Astor, who had inherited it from his father. Its reporters were notoriously underpaid but many staff were reluctant to unionise.

Though liberal on most social and political issues, Astor treated the Observer as a feudal estate. Many writers were his friends – "we are all part of the litter of his past," one said – as was managing director Tristan Jones who told the chapel committee that it risked

sinking the paper financially.

Eric, from a Birmingham working-class home, worked on local papers including the Birmingham Post before he joined the Daily Mail, later the Guardian and then the Observer. His reports for the latter on mafia penetration of London's casinos persuaded the government to tighten gambling laws. He was a natural choice to head the Observer's Inquiry team, its answer to the Sunday Times' celebrated Insight. Alas, the team was disbanded after its inquiries upset too many of Astor's friends, particularly Hugh Carleton Greene, then BBC director-general.

Soon after, Eric left the paper. By then, the NUJ chapel was firmly established and, on the committee, he met his wife, Marcelle Bernstein.

He worked as a freelance writer until his death, publishing thrillers, which prompted comparisons with John le Carré, and non-fiction, which included exposés of the advertising and toy industries.

Peter Wilby

CODE OF CONDUCT

A JOURNALIST

Members of the National Union of Journalists are expected to abide by the following professional principles

1 At all times upholds and defends the principle of media freedom, the right of freedom of expression and the right of the public to be informed.

2 Strives to ensure that information disseminated is honestly conveyed, accurate and fair.

3 Does her/his utmost to correct harmful inaccuracies.

4 Differentiates between fact and opinion.

5 Obtains material by honest, straightforward and open means, with the exception of investigations that are both overwhelmingly in the public interest and which involve evidence that cannot be obtained by straightforward means.

6 Does nothing to intrude into anybody's private life, grief or distress

unless justified by overriding consideration of the public interest.

7 Protects the identity of sources who supply information in confidence and material gathered in the course of her/his work.

8 Resists threats or any other inducements to influence, distort or suppress information, and takes no unfair personal advantage of information gained in the course of her/

his duties before the information is public knowledge.

9 Produces no material likely to lead to hatred or discrimination on the grounds of a person's age, gender, race, colour, creed, legal status, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation.

10 Does not by way of statement, voice or appearance endorse by advertisement any commercial product

or service save for the promotion of her/his own work or of the medium by which she/he is employed.

11 A journalist shall normally seek the consent of an appropriate adult when interviewing or photographing a child for a story about her/his welfare.

12 Avoids plagiarism.



The NUJ believes a journalist has the right to refuse an assignment or be identified as the author of editorial that would break the letter or spirit of the code. The NUJ will fully support any journalist disciplined for asserting her/his right to act according to the code.

The 'father of history' laid the foundations of journalism, says **Bob Doran**

Learning from Herodotus

Picture the headline: 'Minister Showed Off Nude Wife To Aide'. Now read on: "A cabinet minister has resigned after it emerged that he had plotted to show off his naked wife to his parliamentary private secretary."

Now this isn't a real-life news story – it's the legend of Candaules, king of Lydia, as recounted by Greek historian Herodotus. He relates how Candaules was so besotted with the beauty of his wife that he forced one of his bodyguards to observe her undressed. The story ends not with Candaules' resignation but with his death at the hands of his wife and bodyguard.

Herodotus is routinely labelled 'the father of history' and there is no arguing with that. But for me he is also the father of journalism and, when I am in a training room discussing 'What is news?', I make sure a picture of an ancient bust of him appears on the big screen.

That's not just because of his nose for a good story of the Candaules variety – it's because of his search for truth and particularly the way he handled sources. At a time when even the survival of honest journalism is being questioned, it is worthwhile remembering its ancient pedigree.

Herodotus was born, probably in the 480s BC, in Halicarnassus, a city on the Aegean coast in what is now Bodrum in Turkey. He travelled far and wide gathering information for his histories (the original Greek term translates as 'enquiries') of the Greco-Persian Wars and the events that led up to them.

The histories are not all about wars. Large chunks are travellers' tales in the style of David Attenborough or Alan Whicker. There are even the makings of a gardening programme about the

irrigation of Assyrian wheat fields and a cookery column about the merits of Babylonian sesame seed oil.

But it is the wars and their causes that are the centre of the histories and, right from the start, Herodotus proclaims one of the fundamentals of decent journalism – impartiality. In his first paragraph, he makes it clear he is not doing PR for the Greeks. He says he wants to keep alive the great achievements of the Greeks and of the Barbarians (which is pretty much everyone else).

He goes straight on to an exercise in sourcing, on the issue of 'Who started the war'.

In the training room, I ask the team how they would handle a good story from only one source which they cannot be sure of. My advice is, unless there is a compelling legal or other reason, to run the story and name the source. Herodotus does exactly that, outlining the Greeks' and Persians' rival versions.

When dealing with rival accounts, he sometimes admits he cannot be sure. It's not a question of Trumpian 'alternative facts' – it's being honest about his uncertainty.

At other times, he offers his view of what is most likely. He recounts the death of Persian ruler Cyrus in battle with Queen Tomyris and the Massagetans, relating how the Persians won the first round by feigning a retreat, leaving behind a picnic, then pouncing on a drunken enemy band.

However, Tomyris won the day and pushed the head of the dead Cyrus into a wineskin of blood. Herodotus is clear that there are many versions of how Cyrus died, but says this is the most plausible.

He does recount stories, often religious or mythological, which

seem preposterous two and a half millennia later.

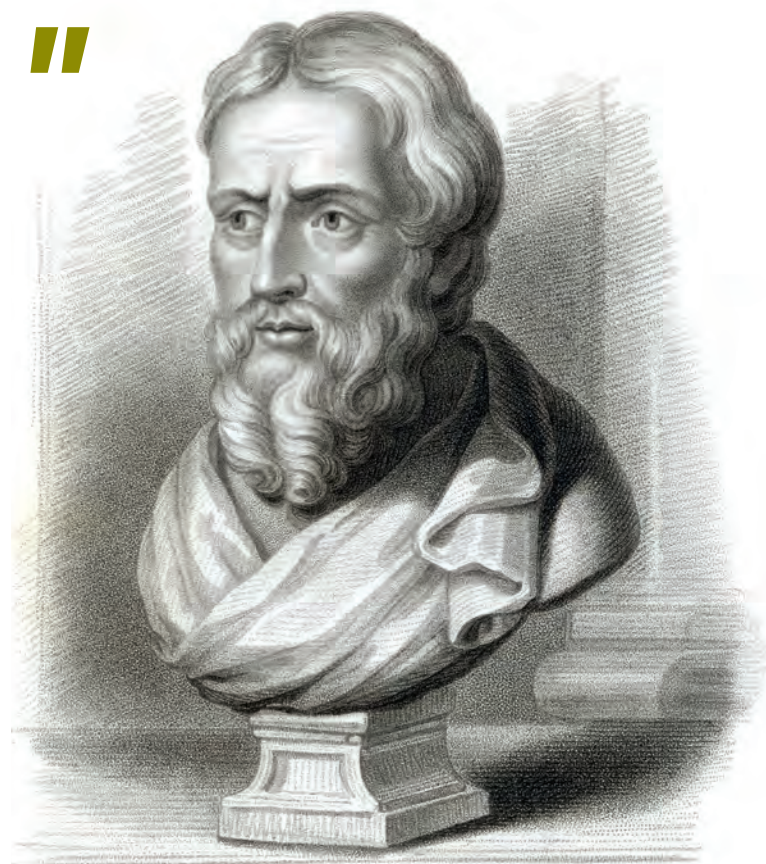
For example, he reports an account by Athenian runner Philippides, who carried messages between Athens, Sparta and the battlefield of Marathon, of a chance meeting en route with the god Pan. Apparently, Pan told him to go home and tell his fellow citizens to be respectful to the god.

It is not clear if Herodotus believes it but the Athenians certainly did, and they built a sanctuary to Pan under the Acropolis after their victory at Marathon.

It may seem odd to read these stories interspersed among hard historical material. However, I do not think it detracts from the integrity with which Herodotus handles the serious stuff.

He holds to one of the principles I emphasise in the training room: if you're honest with your audience, you won't go far wrong.

“That's not just because of his nose for a good story - it's because of his search for truth and particularly the way he handled sources”



and finally...

Celebrity is a serious business for us

We need each other, says Chris Proctor

When my daughter Katy was teaching in south London, she asked her class what they wanted to do when they finished school. A few opted for jobs you'd expect – train driving, drug trafficking, journalism – but a narrow majority wanted to be 'celebrities'.

"For what?" Katy asked, causing lifted eyebrows.

"Money and fame, innit?"

"But what do you want to be a celebrity for doing?"

They didn't want to be a celebrity for doing anything. Not writing books, saving whales or singing songs. They just wanted to be a celebrity – as if it were a job.

Good on you, kids! All power to their publicists, I say. Celebrities are very good for business. We journalists are their lifeblood. Without our reporting on their glamorous lifestyles – getting engaged to each other, falling out of taxis wearing short skirts, booking into Priors, eating insects in jungles – they would cease to exist. They need us and anyone who needs us is to be tended and nurtured.

Celebrities create all manner of work. The most difficult is reporting what they do, because usually they don't, apart from have their armpits shaved. But there's always work writing about them in two selected categories. We can be puffers or slappers. Puffers schmooze out sounds of praise, pretending it must be 'awesome' to be a presenter of a kettle-selling programme on a TV station that hasn't even made it onto Freeview's 70 channel list.

Slappers come into play a day or so later, ying and yang style. Their task is to swat down the previously puffed celebs, thus restoring balance and sanity. They point out violent tendencies, foul mouths, stupid views, lurid pasts and varicose veins.

Naturally, I applaud the contributions celebs make to expanding the range of jobs in our area. But, at the risk of biting the creamed and massaged hand that feeds, I often wonder why they do it? They must know they will be celebrated for 10 minutes and jeered at for the remainder of their lives as 'that bloke who's a footballer's son who got kicked out of the Big Brother house on his way in'. We paid attention to them, now it's payback time.

Your average celeb is popular for the length of time it takes to prepare a Cup-a-Soup. They have their five minutes in the flashbulb then, like Eva Carneiro, Keri Hulme, loon pants and man-sized tissues, we've done with them.

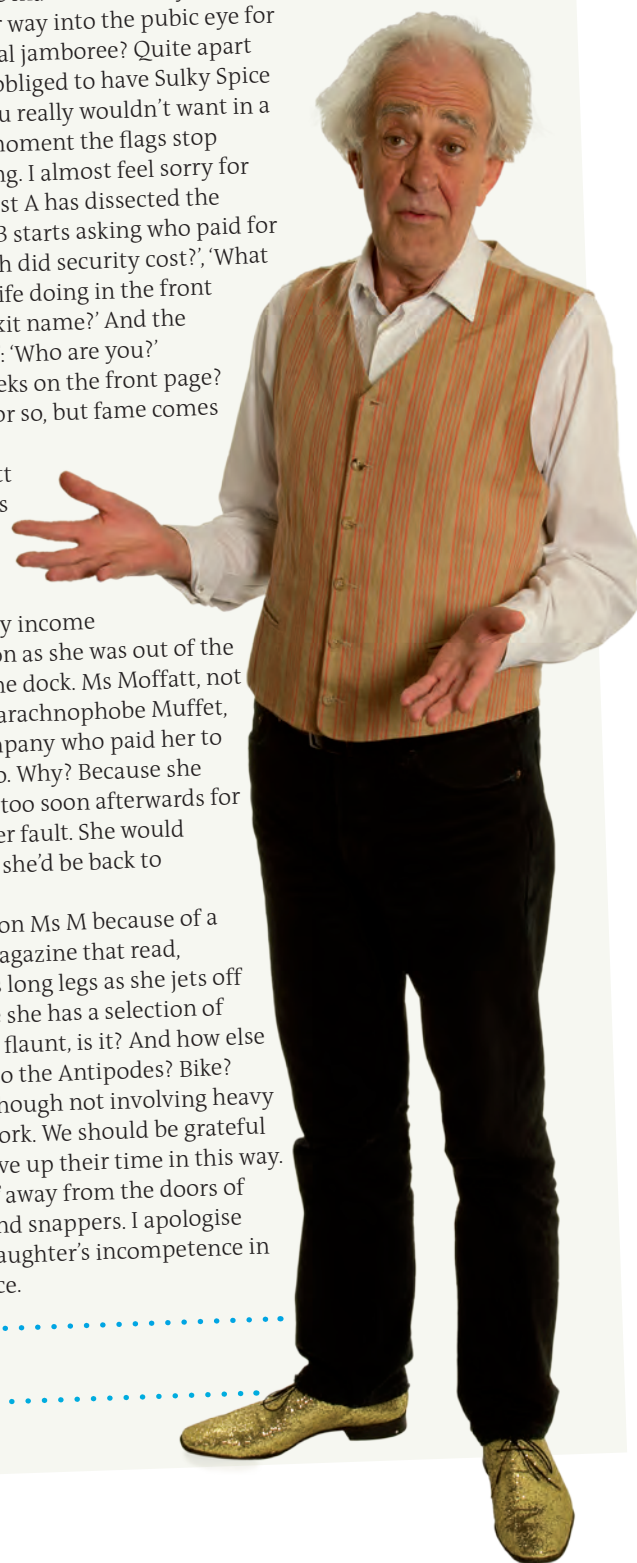
And what about the huge mass of semi-royal celebs whose members nose their way into the public eye for a publicly funded connubial jamboree? Quite apart from the fact that they're obliged to have Sulky Spice at their nuptials (which you really wouldn't want in a smiley-pic scenario), the moment the flags stop waving, the bile starts piling. I almost feel sorry for them. The instant journalist A has dissected the wedding dress, journalist B starts asking who paid for it. Then there's: 'How much did security cost?', 'What was that bloke from Westlife doing in the front pew?', 'Isn't Eugenie a Brexit name?' And the football-inspired chant of: 'Who are you?'

Is it worth it for two weeks on the front page? It might be fun for a day or so, but fame comes back to bite you.

Look at poor old Scarlett Moffatt. To her credit, this rather misleadingly titled 'personality' provided our snapper members with temporary income opportunities but, as soon as she was out of the limelight, she was into the dock. Ms Moffatt, not to be confused with the arachnophobe Muffet, is being sued by the company who paid her to make a weight-loss video. Why? Because she put the pounds back on too soon afterwards for their liking. It's hardly her fault. She would naturally have assumed she'd be back to anonymity after lunch.

Actually, I only mention Ms M because of a headline I saw in OK! magazine that read, 'Scarlett Moffatt flaunts long legs as she jets off to Australia.' It's not like she has a selection of differently sized legs to flaunt, is it? And how else is she supposed to get to the Antipodes? Bike?

Yes, being a celeb, although not involving heavy lifting, remains dirty work. We should be grateful to those prepared to give up their time in this way. They keep many a wolf away from the doors of our puffers, slappers and snappers. I apologise unreservedly for my daughter's incompetence in the area of career advice.



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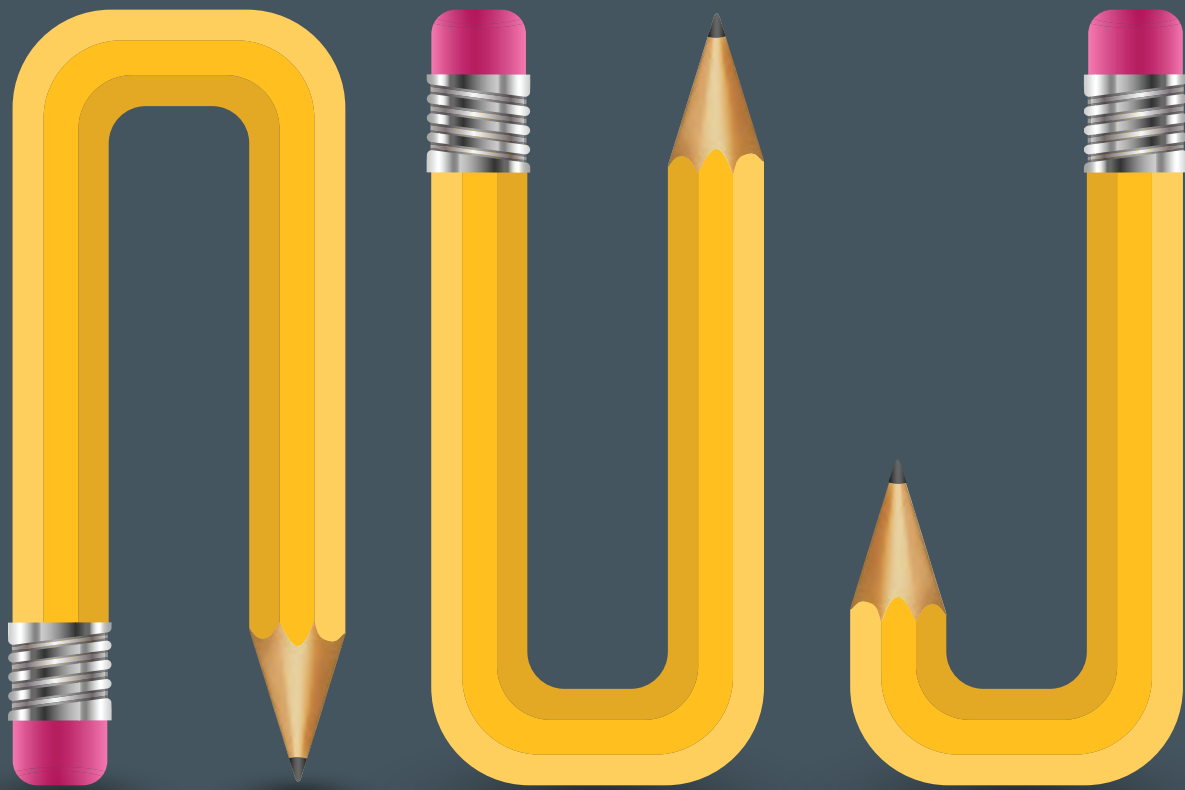


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